Welcome Team
Core Competencies and Customer Service

Indiana Department of Workforce Development Professional Development

Topics

- Goals and Core Competencies
- Customer Service
- Fundamental Attribution Error
- Effective Communication
- Handling "Difficult" Customers
- Professionalism/Professional Boundaries

Goals of WorkOne Center

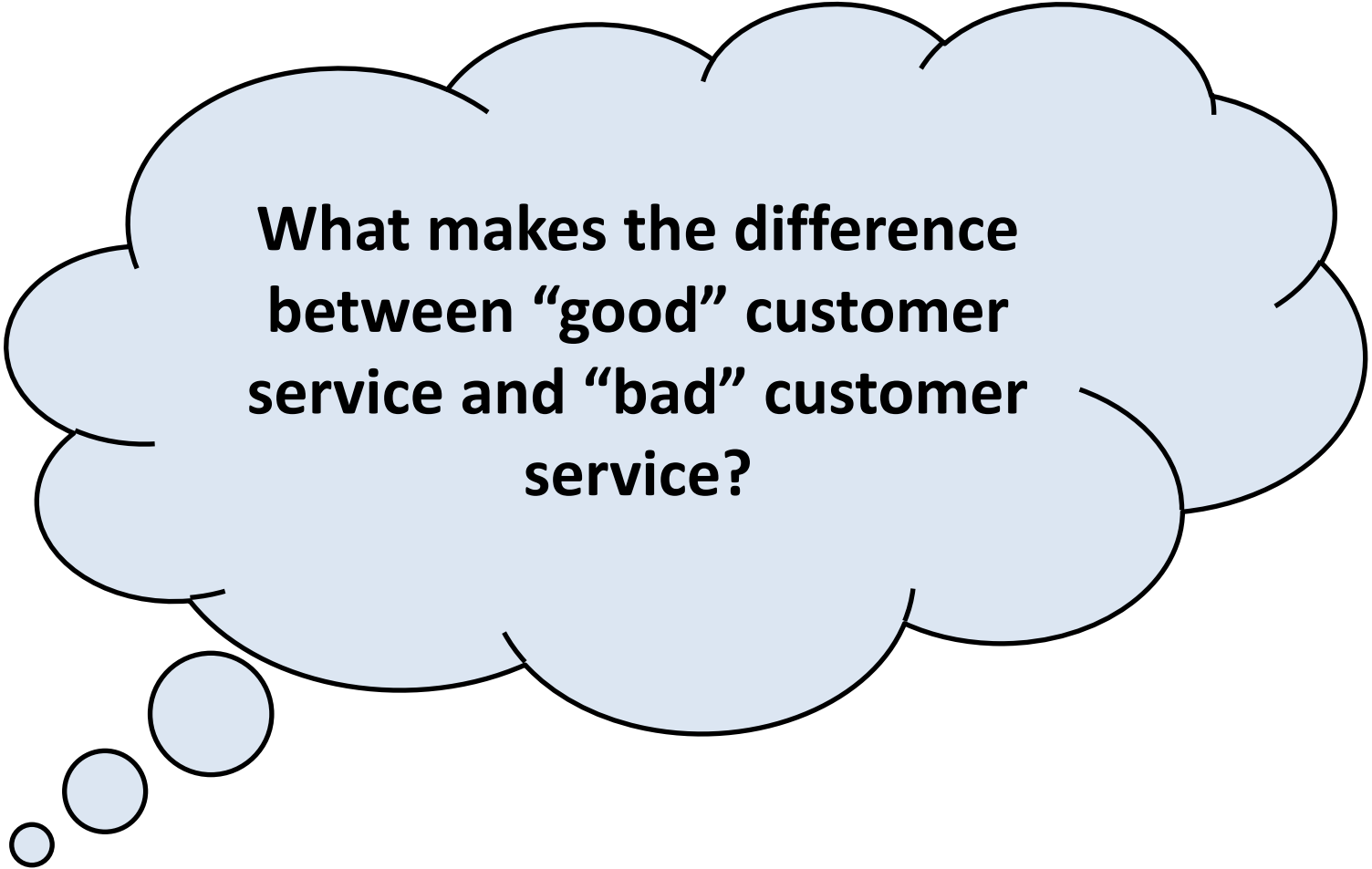"*Aggressively empower Indiana workers to become a highly-skilled, competitive workforce*"

- Provides integrated workforce development services

- Assist customers choose a career, find a new or better job, access education, connect with employers and resources or get information needed to succeed workplace

Goals of the Welcome Team

- Provide a welcoming and engaging environment for customers of the WorkOne Centers

- Ascertain customers' needs and intents with effective questioning

- Assist customers in successfully completing initial intake and accessing core services

- Explain and direct customers to appropriate service options
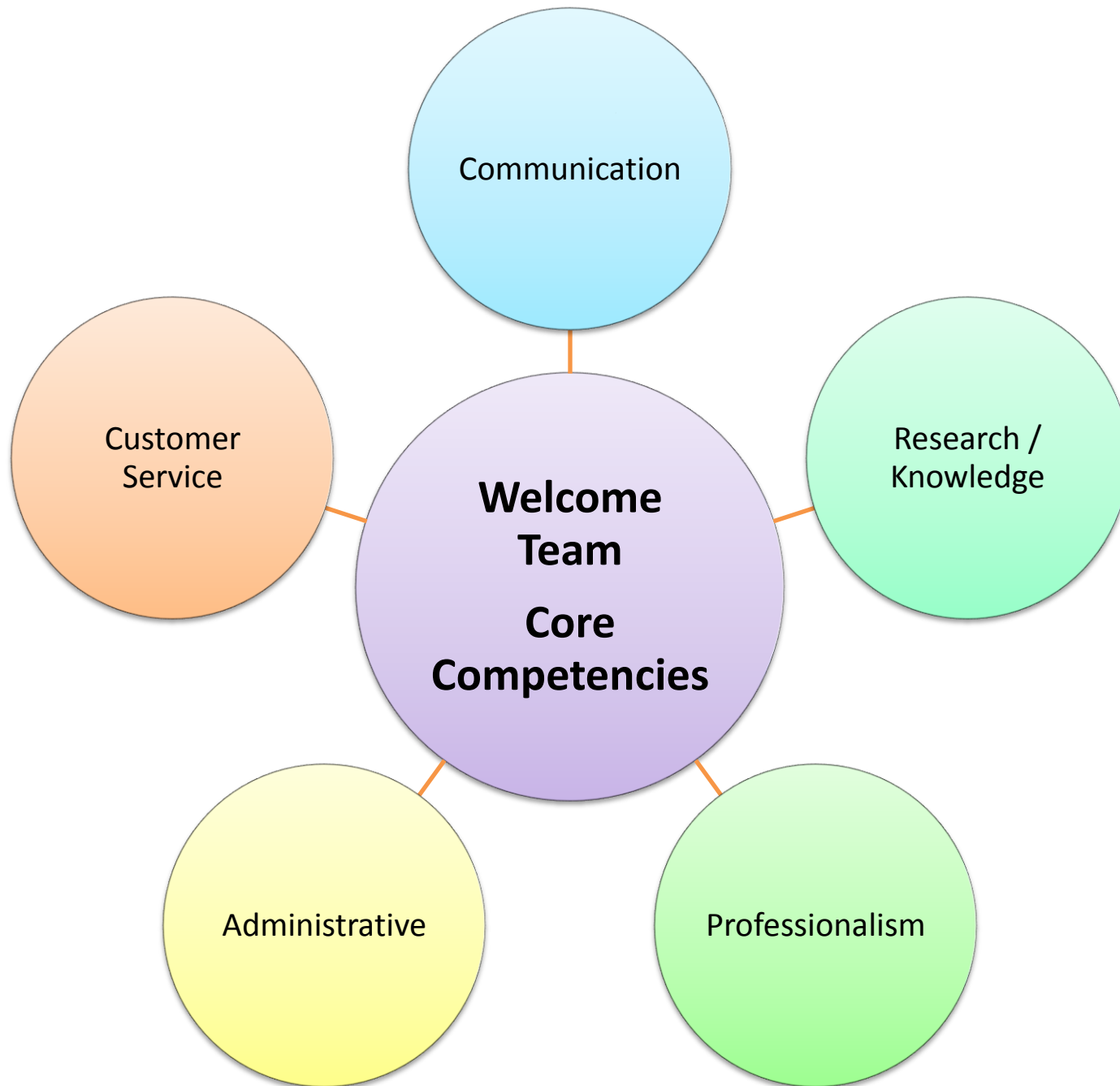
What makes the difference between "good" customer service and "bad" customer service?

*Customer service at the WorkOne Centers is about the QUALITY of services being offered.
*Customers must be given the necessary information to move forward in making necessary changes to reach their goals.

Example

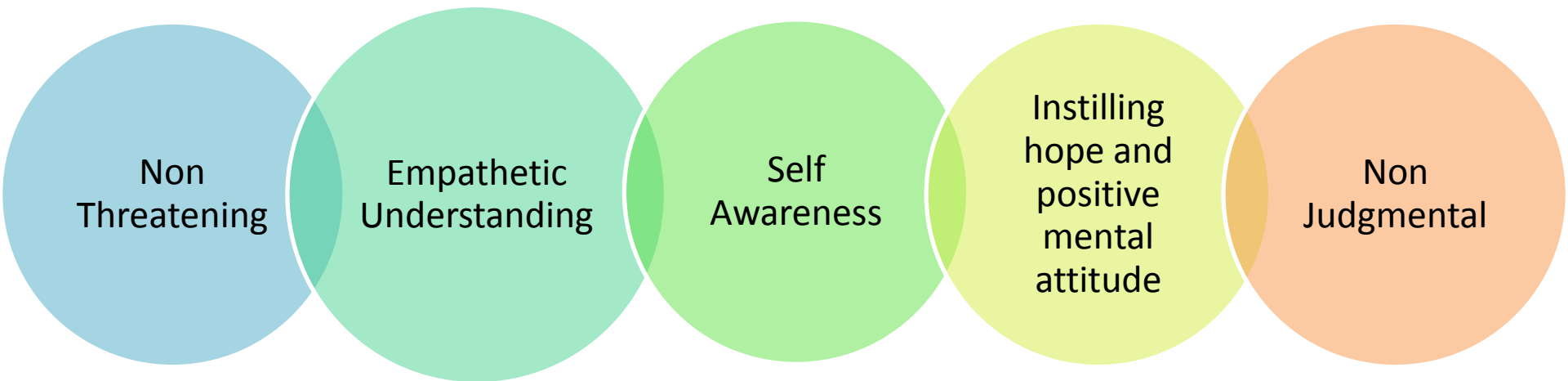A customer walks into the WorkOne Center for the first time.

❑ A standard approach is to give them the forms they need to complete and tell them to have a seat while they fill them out.

❑ A more customer service approach would be to welcome them, explain the process that new customers must go through and the amount of time they should expect to be there, and ask them if they have any questions before sitting down to begin the paperwork process.

Engagement

Participation in cooperative, useful and reciprocal interactions that will open the customer to positive change

Non Threatening

Empathetic Understanding

Self Awareness

Instilling hope and positive mental attitude

Non Judgmental

Fundamental Attribution Error (FAE)
Actor/Observer Bias

■Tendency to overestimate the extent to which another person's behavior is due to *internal/dispositional* factors and to underestimate the role of *external/situational* factors.

Two-Step Process of Attribution

Initial Attribution

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Reflection
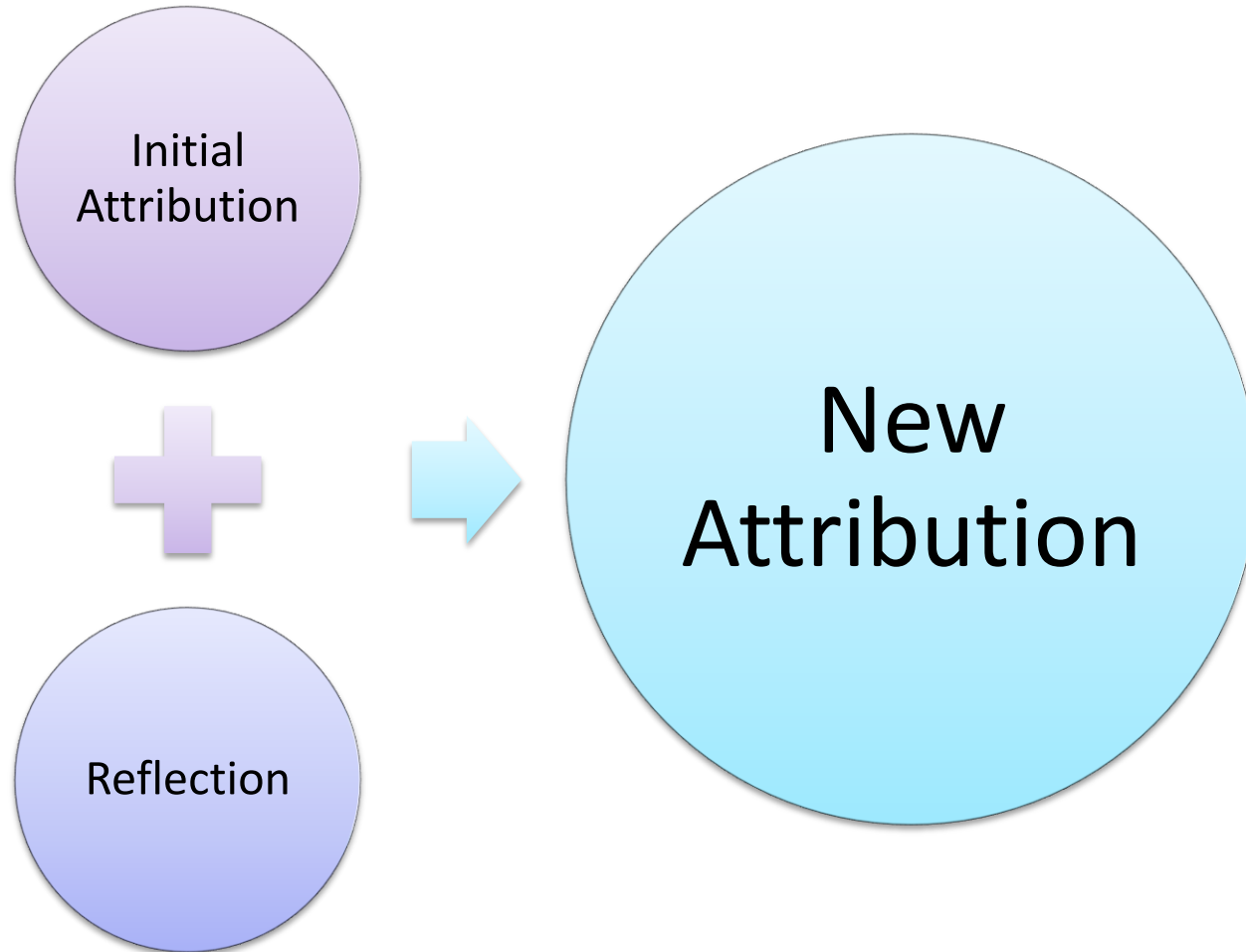
New Attribution

Two-Step Process of Attribution in the WorkOne Center

A customer approaches the Welcome Team looking very disheveled carrying a folder with folded up and wrinkled paperwork. They say, without waiting their turn, in a very loud voice that they would like to speak with *someone* who can give them the help they need on the computer because "the thing doesn't seem to want to work."

Initial Attribution

• Unprofessional, Sloppy, Messy, Rude, Unskilled

Reflection/ Possible External Factors

• Lack of computer experience, Physical or medical issues, Frustration with situation

New Attribution

• By overcoming FAE, you will be able to consider all the possible explanations/causes, generate multiple options and encourage behavior modification because you are considering all factors, not just dispositional attributions.

Why is understanding FAE so important?

- Allows the Welcome Team to take an active role in self-evaluation and avoid jumping to conclusions

- Helps assist "difficult" customers in a patient and understanding way

- May lead to uncovering needs for additional services

Which leads to more effective interactions with customers and creates a more comfortable, empowering initial WorkOne experience.

Effective Communication – Active Listening

Non-Verbal Behavior

Questioning

Reflection Statements

Active Listening

➢ Way of interacting with another person that ensures mutual understanding

➢ Requires listener to focus on what the speaker is trying to say

➢ Not just listening, but *showing* listening through eye contact and body language

➢ An attempt to understand, interpret and evaluate the information being communicated

"How can I help you?"

It is important to be self-aware and attentive to what your body language is communicating intentionally and unintentionally

Non-Verbal Dos and Don'ts

DO

➢ Face customer squarely

➢ Adopt an open posture

➢ Establish and maintain eye contact

➢ Allow positive and supportive facial expressions

➢ Smile

DON'TS

➢ Do not turn your back to the customer

➢ Avoid crossing limbs

➢ Avoid appearing tense, fidgety, or distracted

➢ Eliminate distractions: don't check email, answer the phone or allow other customers to interrupt

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Questioning

- Obtain specific information

- Understand customers' intent

- Gather and verify necessary demographic and eligibility information

Closed vs. Open-Ended Questions

Close-Ended Questions

- Used to verify or clarify information
- Can be answered with a one word answer
- Useful to guide a customer to the information you need.
- Examples: "What is your highest level of completed education?" or "How long have you been unemployed?"

Open-Ended Questions

- Used to encourage broader responses
- Require a lengthier, more detailed answer
- Useful to uncover a customer's purpose at the WorkOne
- Example: "How may we help you today?" or "I see this is your first time at the WorkOne. What kind of services are you interested in?"

Questioning Do's and Don'ts

➤ Vary your questioning approach (open vs. close-ended) based on the information you are trying to gather

➤ Remain aware of the types of questions you are asking

➤ Be aware of time constraints

➤ Avoid over-using questions that start with "Why"

➤ Prepare a list of questions in advance to help stay focused

➤ Important to only obtain necessary information to direct customer properly

Reflection Statements

Mirroring, Paraphrasing, and Feeling Reflections

Allow a customer to feel as though they have been heard.	Allow you to confirm that you understood what a customer has said.	Helpful when a customer is not forthcoming with information or is offering vague responses.	Allow you to understand not only the message but the emotion behind that message.	Helpful when dealing with difficult customers.

Reflection Statements

Mirroring	Paraphrasing	Feeling Reflections
✓Repeating what the customer said word-for-word (a verbal head-nod)	✓Clarifying or condensing large amounts of information to focus on a specific aspect	✓Demonstrating empathy by referencing the customers' emotion
✓Acknowledges you heard the customer	✓Acknowledge you heard the main point of what is being communicated	✓Acknowledge and recognize the emotional impact of a situation
✓Useful when customers are giving short answers or are saying little	✓Useful when customers are over-sharing information or getting off-topic	✓Useful when a customer is conveying a strong emotion

Using Reflection Statements-Example

Customer:

"Ugh. You're not going to make me fill out more paperwork are you? Do you know how much paperwork I've already had to do before I even got here? I'm starting to feel like this isn't even worth it."

Using Reflection Statements-Example

Mirroring

- "You have already had to fill out a lot of paperwork before you got here and you're starting to feel like this isn't worth it. There aren't many more forms to fill out, and it's important that we get this information to make sure you have access to all of the resources you may need. <Can you tell me a little about the services you were interested in…>"

Paraphrasing

- "It sounds like you've already completed a lot of paperwork and aren't sure if this is worth the bother. This process is important to make sure we have all the necessary information <What are you interested in accomplishing while at the WorkOne Center? >"
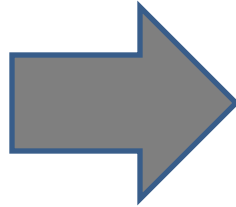
Feeling Reflection

- "It sounds like you are feeling frustrated about the amount of paperwork you're being asked to complete. <Is this how you are feeling? What can I do today to make this process feel less cumbersome to you?>"

Think of a time when you had to deal with a "difficult" customer.

Why are customers "difficult"?

- Loud
- Disgruntled
- Demanding
- Rude
- Negative
- "Causing a scene"
- Inappropriate language or behaviors

- Unaware of "normal or expected behavior"
- Does not feel heard
- Nervous or anxious
- Intimidated
- Frustrated
- Previous negative experience

Strategy for working with difficult or upset customers

Assess

Acknowledge

Deescalate

Develop a Solution

Assess

Quickly and objectively assess the customer's situation without making assumptions or committing the Fundamental Attribution Error

Observe customer behaviors and use active listening skills

Ask questions to obtain all relevant facts

Be aware of any safety issues and follow office safety plan when necessary

Acknowledge

Recognize, affirm and acknowledge customer's position, situation or feelings

| Acknowledge the customer's feelings but do not make assumptions. Use questioning . | → | Use empathy. | → | Do not take situation personally. |

De-escalate

Diffuse or decrease the emotional intensity and tension resulting from the difficult situation

Be aware of non verbal cues. → Keep focused on what can be done in the future. → Effectively use reflection statements.

Using Reflections to De-escalate

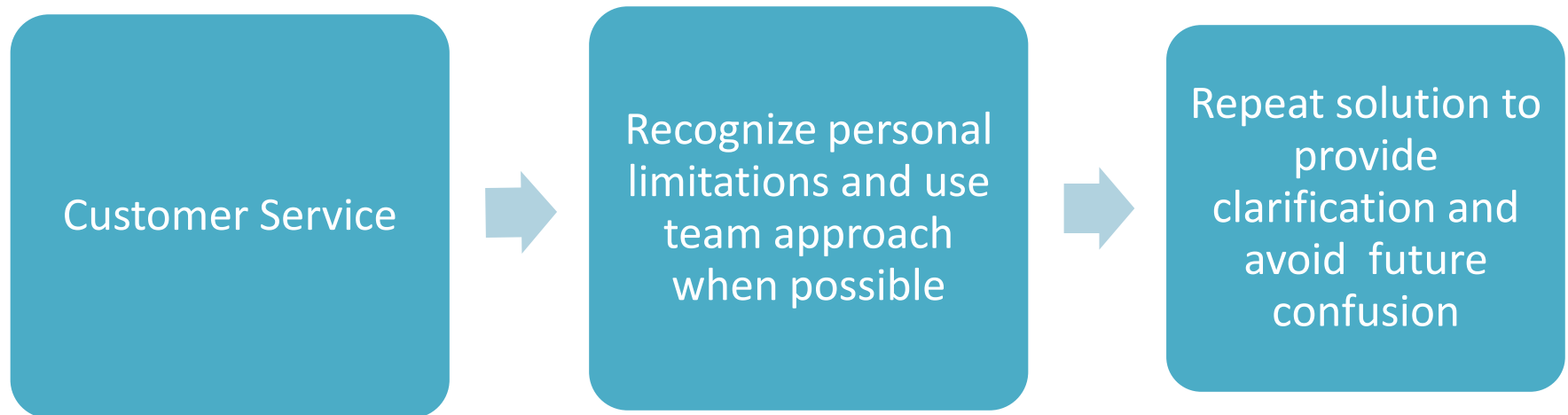Slow the pace of an emotionally charged situation

Opportunity for clarification

Develop rapport

Allows customer to feel heard and validated

Develop Solutions

Goal is to create a mutually agreed upon empowering resolution with the customer

Customer Service

Recognize personal limitations and use team approach when possible

Repeat solution to provide clarification and avoid future confusion

Professional Boundaries

Clearly established limits that allow a Welcome Team member to make professional, ethical and safe connections with customers to provide appropriate assistance

Professional Boundaries

✓ Restrict access to personal information

✓ Limit self disclosure

✓ Establish professional work space

✓ Conversations should be related to topics that directly relate to career and educational goals

✓ All information shared must be factual and up to date

Welcome team members have an important role in customers' experiences at the WorkOne Center.

Understand the goals

Customer service

Focus on customer empowerment and engagement

Use strategies to limit FAE

Effective communication and active listening techniques

Appropriately handle difficult situations and customers

Maintain professional boundaries

Questions

Resources

http://in.gov/dwd/WorkOneProfessionalDevelopment.htm